



Continental Chronicle

Spring 2010

Bike Safety Tips

from Gregg Tinkham, Acting Chief Ranger and IPMBA Police Cyclist Instructor #1121

The arrival of warm weather and sunshine will likely stir many of us into searching for a bicycle to dust off, so we can enjoy some exercise outdoors. A little time and attention before you climb on can help prevent some unanticipated hiking, or even worse a ride from the paramedics. The International Police Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA) has developed a system to check your bicycle to help ensure that it's functioning properly and is safe to ride. This procedure only takes a minute or two to complete and should be performed before each ride. I assure you that it will be worth the effort.

ABC Quick Check

A = Air, check the air pressure in your tires. The recommended amount (psi) should be on the sidewall of each tire. Also, check for cracks or signs of excessive wear on the tire, if it looks bad replace it.

B= Brakes, check each brake and make sure it has the proper tension to stop the wheel, without being too short or too long a pull. Also, check the brake pads and cables for wear.

C=Cranks, check them. This is best done by pushing the cranks (not pedals) in towards

and away from the bike to make sure they are not loose.

Quick= Quick Release, make sure that your wheels quick release levers are both firmly closed. The curved part of the lever should be facing in toward the bike and closing it with the proper tension should leave a small imprint in your hand.

Check= Check your chain for proper tension (not too tight or too much sag), also ensure that it is properly lubricated prior to each ride. It is a good idea to put some (bike specific) lubricant on the chain, spin it and then remove the excess with a rag. Also check your derailleurs to ensure that they are smoothly functioning. Tip: pick the bike up a couple of inches and drop it while listening for clunking noises or anything that sounds loose.

Final Reminder: A bicycle is a vehicle, and when riding one you are required to obey the rules of the road. Motorists, bicycles are entitled to use most roadways and you should only pass when it is safe to do so.

Keep pedaling!

Summer Ramp-up

Valley Forge is in full bloom and the warm weather is bringing new life to more than just the red bud and dogwood trees. This month, the 5th

Annual Revolutionary 5-mile Run saw an increase in participation over previous years, and needless to say it was a great way to kick off National Park Week.

Here at Valley Forge, we're gearing up for the summer season which is full of interactive programs, tours, and special events. The popular *Join the Continental Army* program has been added to the daily summer schedule. The extraordinary cast from *Once Upon a Nation* is back and will be conducting after hours tours each weekend and will enliven the storytelling benches throughout the park.

This spring we also have to say goodbye and best wishes to four members of our beloved staff: Dave Moore, Lew Rogers, Earl Cram, and Ann Marie Maher. Dave will further his career in the National Park Service at the Northeast Regional Office, and Lew will take on a new position as Superintendent of Petersburg National Battlefield. After 36 years in the National Park Service, 28 of them at Valley Forge, we thank and wish all the best to Earl Cram on his retirement. Ann Marie, a vital partner to the Park will advance from the Valley Forge Convention and Visitors Bureau to begin a new partnership with the Prince William County/Manassas, VA Convention and Visitors Bureau.

All of us at the park look forward to seeing you out here this summer!

-Mike Caldwell, Superintendent



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5th Annual 5-mile Revolutionary Run Recap

The annual run has once again surpassed the previous years' numbers. This year there were 1,440 participants, 1,182 runners, 179 walkers, and 79 attendees in the Youth Fun Run. Since last year the race saw over an 11% increase in runner participation, a 20% increase since the first year in 2006. The recently-founded Young Friends group gathered a handful of volunteers to assist with the Youth Fun Run, and the Valley Forge Convention and Visitors Bureau successfully collected a number of shoes in their Nike ReUse a Shoe sneaker drive. Winners of this year's race were Jonathan Fasulo (25:23) and Molly Pritz (28:02). We want to thank our partners and all the participants for another successful race, and we hope to see you all again in years to come.

Junior Ranger Adventure Camp

This summer, in cooperation with the Upper Merion Township Parks and Recreation Department, the park will provide an exciting day camp adventure for 100 children between 8 and 12 years of age. Campers will discover the history and natural environment at Valley Forge and will fulfill all the requirements to become a Junior Park Ranger during this week-long experience. Kids will hike through forests and meadows and discover the plants and animals that call the park home, meet characters from the American Revolution and experience their stories, spend a day in Valley Creek as members of the 'Crayfish Corps,' and see fossils from animals that roamed Valley Forge during the Great Ice Age. In addition to having a lot of fun outdoors, participants will become stewards of the park – helping to protect park resources into the future.

Please visit www.uppermerionparkandrec.org for more information on dates, time, costs, and registration, or contact Heather Melck at 610-265-1071 ext 139.



The "View" from the "Fourge"



Highlighting the "view" from inside park operations, as well as the 18th century, Valley Forge's in-park production group, named *The Fourge*, is making their mark on YouTube. The group began filming podcasts this year and plans to premiere a new podcast each month throughout the summer.

Have ideas about what you'd like to see? Email us at valleyforghnp@gmail.com, post a comment on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

[Click here for ValleyForgeNHP's YouTube account](#)



Thropp's Creek Restoration

Valley Forge is underlain by many regional utility lines placed here before 1976, when the land was designated as a national historical park. One of these is a 36" main that carries water from the Pickering reservoir and serves most of the Main Line area. The line crosses Thropp's Creek, a small spring-fed creek that rises near the Steuben Memorial at the western end of the park. Severe erosion working its way up the creek was threatening the stability and function of the water main, owned and maintained by Aqua Pennsylvania. The line originally had been buried below the creek bed, but head-cutting of the creek recently exposed it, subjecting it to additional stresses and potential failure.

Aqua hired the engineering firm of Gannett Fleming, Inc., with local offices in Audubon, to find a means to protect the line while preserving and restoring the natural values of the creek. NPS Water Resources experts and park natural resources staff set performance goals for the project, and the firm designed a project to raise the streambed from four to six feet using a combination of the existing native streambed material and additional stone. Strategically placed boulders created a series of step-pools through the length of the restoration area to hold the raised bed in place. The design resulted in the water main being reburied three feet under the stream bed.

LandStudies, Inc., an environmental consulting company based in Lititz, was chosen by Aqua for their expertise in stream and floodplain restoration. They provided most of the construction management and native plant installation for the project.

In addition to constructing the series of step-pools, they installed fascines (rough bundles of brushwood used for strengthening an earthen structure), bio-logs, and native grasses and woody plants along the banks to provide additional stabilization and erosion control.

Because of the sensitive location in one of Pennsylvania's most historic areas, minimally invasive techniques were used during construction to protect both plants and animals. Only a few trees were removed, and all of them were fewer than six inches in diameter.



The month-long restoration project was completed in November. The water main is once again protected from the elements, the relevant section of Thropp's Creek has been stabilized, and a new community of native plants has been installed along the stream banks.

Mark Gutshall of LandStudies pointed out that "in many cases where protecting infrastructure is a priority, the surrounding environment suffers. With enough planning and expertise, though, that doesn't have to be the case. Superintendent Michael Caldwell called the finished project "a remarkable environmental solution to the problem. We applaud Aqua's willingness to go the extra mile to protect the creek."



Get up, get out, & pitch in!

Upcoming volunteer opportunities in the park:

Saturday, June 5, 2010

National Trails Day

National Trails Day® (NTD) inspires the public and trail enthusiasts nationwide to seek out their favorite trails to discover, learn about, and celebrate trails while participating in educational exhibits, trail dedications, gear demonstrations, instructional workshops and trail work projects.

Volunteers will be able to assist with trails maintenance and invasive vine removal.

To sign up contact VIP coordinator, Ernestine White:

Email: Ernestine_White@nps.gov

Phone: 610-783-5384



VIP working on invasive vine removal

Schedule of Events

MAJOR PARK EVENTS

April

National Junior Ranger Day

Sat, Apr 24, 11am – 3pm

May

French Alliance Commemoration

Sat, May 1, 11am – 3pm

Sun, May 2, 11:30am – 1pm

Memorial Day –

National Moment of Remembrance

Mon, May 31, 3pm

June

National Trails Day

Sat, Jun 5, 9am – 3pm

March-out of the Continental Army Annual Commemoration Living History Program

Sat, Jun 19, 10am – 4pm

Junior Park Ranger Summer Camp through Upper Merion Parks and Recreation

Week long programs begin

June 28 through August 6, 2010

www.uppermerionparkandrec.org

July

Independence Day Celebration

Sun, Jul 4, 11am – 4pm

Touring the Park this summer



Tour by phone or download video/audio to your iPod before you come! Call 484-396-1018 to hear 1-2 min prompts at each tour stop. Search Valley Forge Park on iTunes for podcasts about history and natural resources.



90 minute guided tours depart from the front of the Visitor Center and travel throughout the Park with extended stops at the Muhlenberg Brigade Huts and Washington's Headquarters. Fee Charged. Purchase your tickets at the store or reserve ahead 610-783-1074



Six miles of paved multi-purpose trail winds through the park, in addition to the ten-mile self-guided automobile tour. Audio CDs of the tour are available for sale in the Encampment Store and come with a park map.



Hike, walk, run, bike, or ride horseback. Valley Forge Park has 28 miles of trail for these activities. Visit the Park's website or Visitor Center for more trail information and maps. www.nps.gov/vafo

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Stand and be counted

as a member of the Friends of Valley Forge Park :

- Receive 10% off discount at the Encampment Store
- Invitations to tours, seminars, and receptions and more!
- Receive up to date park information through email

Join us! online at www.friendsofvalleyforge.org

or in the Encampment Store in the lower floor of the Visitor Center

